Kathryn S. Olmsted. Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I to 9/11.
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efeller, Mayor John Lindsay, and Senator Jacob Javits, to tack to the right. Both authors also employ a similar and traditional methodology, ably mining the archival record to give primacy to election results and political figures—party leaders, campaign aides, and elected officials—rather than larger social developments.

The Center Cannot Hold is, in a sense, a prequel to *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (2001), Rick Perlstein's seminal account of the 1964 campaign. Inevitably, Gifford presents familiar material on Buckley, *National Review*, Young Americans for Freedom, Goldwater, and the conservative operatives who saw him as their great hope. But she breaks new ground by examining the 1960 election from a ground-level, constituency-based perspective. In particular, she contrasts the success of the Right at organization building among conservative youths, intellectuals, and southerners with the failure of liberals in the GOP to broaden their appeal to African Americans and white ethnics, for whom Nixon's anticommunist credentials mattered less than John F. Kennedy's Catholic faith. Part of the problem lay with Rockefeller himself, whose refusal to run, as Gifford rightly puts it, "deprived his liberal constituents of a legitimate voice in the political process" (p. 17). But a larger problem for liberals was their continued reliance on policy studies and top-down, elite leadership rather than grass-roots efforts to attract popular support. As a consequence, she concludes, conservatives had effectively captured control of the Republican Party by the end of 1960.

By contrast, *New York State and the Rise of Modern Conservatism* begins at that very moment, when two Republican Wall Street lawyers, Kieran O'Doherty and his brother-in-law, J. Daniel Mahoney, decided to organize conservatives into a third party so they could punish liberals like Rockefeller for their supposed lack of loyalty to Nixon in the recent campaign and take advantage of New York's unique laws, which set a low ballot threshold and permitted minor parties to cross-endorse—or not—the candidates of major parties. At times, the Conservative Party and the state GOP cooperated when it was to their mutual advantage. At others, they competed, as in 1965 when Buckley ran unsuccessfully for mayor against Lindsay. In 1970, however, James Buckley, William's brother, ran successfully against liberal Republican incumbent Charles Goodell, whose antiwar stance had angered the Nixon White House. "We got that son of a bitch," Vice President Spiro Agnew reportedly stated (p. 111). Within a year, Lindsay had switched parties and Rockefeller had become an advocate of law and order. By 1980, the Conservative Party had achieved its aims of institutional cooperation and ideological compatibility with the Republican Party, symbolized by the joint election of Alfonse D'Amato to the U.S. Senate, replacing Javits, the last great liberal Republican in the Empire State.

Both of these books have minor flaws. Gifford implies, with an air of finality, that after 1960 the triumph of the conservatives over the moderates in the GOP was complete and irreversible. Yet in the wake of the Goldwater defeat and the Watergate scandal the moderates made strong, if ultimately failed, bids to reassert their preeminence within the party. Sullivan suggests that William Buckley's call for law and order during his failed bid for city hall in 1965 highlighted the potency of the issue to a national audience without taking into full consideration the greater impact of Reagan's capture of the statehouse in California in 1966. At times both works also become preoccupied with campaign tactics and political minutiae from an insider's perspective, which is not surprising given the sources used. Finally, more attention to the changing electoral dynamics and demographics at the state and national level would have provided more contextualization for the arguments the authors make.

Nevertheless, these engaging and insightful studies offer a healthy corrective to structural arguments that minimize human agency and historical contingency. They remind us that ideas and individuals matter, that the rise of the Right was not preordained, regardless of what some conservatives or liberals may believe. Whether the demise of the moderate wing of the GOP was permanent is another matter. As Bill Clinton observed during a budget debate in the White House in 1992, "We're all Eisenhower Republicans here." But of course he was speaking of his fellow Democrats, and in 2010 the Obama administration has struggled to win a single GOP vote in the U.S. Senate for domestic initiatives such as health care. In any event, the strange death of liberal Republicanism, here astutely analyzed and autopsied by the authors, has without question had a profound impact on the political world in which we live today.

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KATHRYN S. OLMSTED. *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I to 9/11*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2009. Pp. x, 320. $29.95.

In 1963, historian Richard Hofstadter donned the clinician's white coat to describe conspiracy theorists and a "paranoid style of American politics" given to exaggeration, distortion, and fantastical thinking. If still the favorite of journalists, Hofstadter's ideas have been significantly revised in the last decade by scholars from diverse disciplines. Their studies have placed conspiracy theorists in a broader frame by considering the institutional, cultural, and technological means that have made conspiracy thinking a mainstream phenomenon. These scholars have suggested that elites in government and the media join countersubversives to teach citizens to fear conspiracy.

In her new book, Kathryn S. Olmsted focuses on the behavior of the federal government, the "taproot" of modern American conspiracism (p. 42). She argues that conspiracy thinking underwent a fundamental transformation during World War I. Before that time, Amer-

icans were concerned about groups subverting the government and turning it to their own devices. This shifted in the crisis of war as the federal government assumed new powers and plotted real conspiracies against its citizens and peoples around the world. Lies, cover-ups, illegal surveillance, and even assassination became the official means to control events. Government officials also developed conspiracy theories to cover their misdeeds and mobilize Americans. Meanwhile, government harassment and spying on dissenters promoted paranoia and discredited alternative views. From these beginnings and over the decades arose the "proto-secretive national security state," one given to imperialism, militarism, and the suppression of progressive politics (p. 14). In encyclopedic fashion, Olmsted offers a rogue's gallery of federal shame. She details the misinformation campaigns of Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt before and during World Wars I and II, J. Edgar Hoover's anticommunism and the FBI COINTELPRO's work to silence dissidents, Kennedy administration attempts to kill Fidel Castro, the Watergate crisis, the CIA's MK-ULTRA plot to use LSD on unsuspecting subjects, and George W. Bush's conspiracy to lever the 9/11 tragedy into war with Iraq, among many other plots.

Defending democratic practices and traditions, conspiracy theorists responded to federal provocations with "counter narratives" (p. 6). These men and women were "authentic patriots" who sought only to awaken their country to the enemy within (p. 12). Among conspiracism's counteragents and watchdogs are America-Firsters Charles Lindbergh and John T. Flynn; scientist Linus Pauling; John F. Kennedy assassination researcher Sylvia Meagher; and the so-called "Jersey Girls," who were widows of 9/11 victims. If less honorably mentioned, also included are right-wing extremist Randy Weaver, Branch Davidian David Koresh, and the Unabomber Theodore Kaczynski.

Olmsted's conspiracy theorists may be combating the real enemies and constraining centralized power, but she sounds a note of caution in her conclusion. Their challenge injects "toxins" into the public discourse and spreads a "dreaded disease" of magical thinking and tortured logic that short circuits historical discovery (pp. 236, 239). Her solution to these problems is to restrain the federal government with new rules of transparency, accountability, and oversight.

Olmsted appropriately concentrates on the role of federal authorities in promoting conspiracy thinking. Their acts have doused public faith and become tinder for conspiracism. By operating a cult of official secrecy, authorities have also abused the public's trust. These are the raw materials of paranoia. Though such federal behavior is already well known, Olmsted's book does a fine job of exposing its long history and enabling readers to discern the pattern of abuse. The author is also to be commended for revealing the role of women in conspiracy thinking, particularly in regard to unraveling the stories behind Kennedy's assassination and 9/11.

That said, such revisionism goes too far. Painting in broad brushstrokes and crying conspiracy blurs the nuances of geopolitics, bureaucratic competition, political crosscurrents, and personalities, among other variables in government action. Condemning Wilson and Roosevelt for systematically lying also deprives the Germans and Japanese of agency and makes them unknowing patsies of their American handlers. Olmsted appreciates too much her subjects' political correctness in opposing the imperial presidency. Only belatedly does she offer muffled warnings about those who lace their theories with shrill accusations that claim betrayal and demonize opponents. It is their tactics that help deny the compromise and civility essential to a democratic society.

Moreover, countersubversives do not simply mimic federal authorities. Their training in the art goes back before the founding of the United States. This is apparent in a pattern that Olmsted finds but largely ignores. The conspiracy theorists she profiles supposedly discovered a secret Jewish hand in many events: the coming of World War II, the anticommunist scare, the Tuskegee experiment, the New World Order, and 9/11. Like Richard Nixon, they decried Jewish influence, going as far as to rail against ZOG—the Zionist Occupation Government in Washington D.C. In the case of the Pearl Harbor conspiracists, Olmsted finds that their relationship to antisemitism was "complicated" (p. 70). Some readers cannot be as sensitive to the ambiguities. Such conspiracy thinking is rooted in deeper matters than federal malfeasance and long predates the coming of World War I. For these conspiracists, perhaps anti-government theories were more a means to a broader end—a solution to the so-called Jewish problem.

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JAMES WOLFINGER. *Philadelphia Divided: Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2007. Pp. xii, 318. $49.95.

James Wolfinger's book is a significant addition to the burgeoning literature on race, politics, and metropolitanization in the United States following World War II. It also joins a growing chorus that locates the origins of a postwar conservative backlash not in the wake of the riotous 1960s but rather in the race-conscious liberalism evident in the New Deal and World War II eras.

With such an approach, Wolfinger richly contextualizes the Philadelphia story and moves beyond the concerns over housing and residential segregation that have served as focal points for much of the earlier work in the field. He traces the now familiar story of public housing, slum clearance, and urban renewal from the New Deal to the 1960s, showing how the rise of the civil rights movement and, especially, the reconstruction of American cities in the postwar period coincided with the demographic shift that rendered them increasingly non-white and segregated. But he also does much more.

Focusing on jobs and the racial segmentation of the labor market, Wolfinger provides a richly informative and finely detailed account of Philadelphia's World